

# English Phonics & Writing Training in Improving Students' Ability of Using English

— Problems & Tentative Suggestions for Elementary School Teachers

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## Introduction

What are English Skills? **Listening, speaking, reading and writing** are the four language skills we need to develop for complete communication. Listening and reading are receptive: passive by inputting, while speaking and writing are productive: output, i.e. the action of producing language as part of the process of second language learning. What are the most important English skills for an elementary school teacher? From my experience of teaching Elementary-teachers-course students, speaking and writing skills seem the most necessary outputting ability to train for the present students. Japanese education pays so much attention to improve students' passive ability of reading and listening for testing that they are not ready and even afraid of speaking English, thus most students are lack of the ability to express themselves and have very little confidants to teach kids in the future. Especially, most students didn't get a systematic training of phonics at the very beginning of learning English, therefore they usually pronounce English with Japanese Katakana accent, which make them feel it hard to communicate with foreigners and teaching in the future.

As for another active and outputting English ability is writing, In order to improve this skill, one has to read a lot, at least some English everyday. According to Neli (2003), "Reading is a fluent process in which readers combine information from a text with their own background knowledge to build meaning. The goal of reading is comprehension." In reading process, vocabulary acquisition is highly demanding for EFL learners. Native speakers are said to have at least a 20,000 word-family receptive vocabulary (Nation, 2001, p. 9), even though EFL learners don't need to have such an extensive vocabulary; as low frequency words seldom occur, it is said that they should have at least 3,000-word families. (Laufer, 1992)

In China, the goal set for College English by Ministry of Education after two years study, requires that students reach 4,200 words, including 1800 learned at high school level. When students finish their third year in university, or Band 5-6, they should master another 1,300 words and 1,000 words for advanced level after they have mastered Band 6. Thus their total vocabulary should reach 6,500 words.

In Japan, the national entrance examination requires all students to have mastery of 1,500 words, and another 900 advanced words are necessary for entrance into the top universities (Kazahaya, 2003). But after students

enter university, there is neither such a national standard of vocabulary acquisition for EFL learners, nor a goal-syllabus-test system to reinforce their English proficiency. Therefore, the following situation occurs: “It is a common assumption that Japanese university students’ English proficiency is at its highest at the time of the entrance examination, after which it is said to decline rapidly. If this is the case, it is a serious problem for teachers of English and curriculum planners.” (Okamoto, 2007) Because of an unsystematic methodology, lower-motivated students at some universities don’t study out of class; therefore, they can’t voice out their opinions well or read efficiently, not to say read those original professional books in their senior years.

What are the causes for this English teaching situation? What are the key steps we have to take to solve these problems? The following paper aims to examine the characteristics of language acquisition from the viewpoint of pronunciation training, vocabulary building and writing practice, and make some tentative suggestions to improve students’ ability of using English.

Keywords: Elementary teachers’ training, English phonics and writing skill, 4-year curriculum

## 1. English Phonics Training for Listening & Speaking

1.1 One reason for Japanese students’ weak ability of speaking English stems from the lack of pronunciation training, (Oota, 2012) 2 According to the paper, English education in Japanese junior and senior high school seldom give the phonics instructions at the beginning of English study. This serious problem brings about the following results: 87.9% of junior high school and 84.8% of senior high school students answered ‘No’ to the question of English phonics and pronunciation training, while 81.8% students replied they hoped they had gotten the phonics training much earlier, and 81.8% of them didn’t have the confidence of English pronunciation nor that of English conversation (p.57-63). Therefore, this becomes a critical problem and a blind spot in Japanese English education (Oota, 2013)

1.2 Another reason is because of the Japanese language characteristics which has only five vowels, lack of sounds and make it difficult to voice out various combinations of English language. In Japanese pronunciation, one can pronounce it with same strength, unlike English which has weak and strong accent, rising and falling intonation, linking between words etc. Moreover, there have a lot of Katakana English included in the daily Japanese, which make it easy for students to pronounce English in the way of Japanese Katakana. These two main reasons become the obstacles for students to listen and speak English comfortably. To solve these kinds of problems, what we have to do is to strengthen the training on English phonics and dictation practice, from listening to speaking.

Following the “Elementary School Foreign Language Activity and Study Guidebook” (Monkasho, 2017), publishing companies began to include some phonics instruction sections of ‘Sounds & Letters’ in English textbooks, such as some popular textbooks: “*We Can!*” 1 & 2 (2017), and “*New Horizon Elementary 6* (2020)”. The importance of enforcing the education on ‘sounds of the letters’ awakens many teachers’ consciousness of pronunciation training and gradually becomes an important task in the present elementary English teaching.

From the experiment of recent years' "English Skill" class, I prepared a check test & a questionnaire among 30 second-year students at the beginning and end of spring semester. Check Test is conducted by using listening part 1 & 2 from Pre-level 2 English Proficiency Test, and the Questionnaire with three questions are given to check students' self- evaluation and confidence in English speaking. The results before and after the phonics training are as follows:

① Listening part 1 & 2 of Pre-level 2 English Proficiency Test: 30 Questions, 30 Scores

April: (before) 30 students	Way of Training: picture assumption dictation mimic-reading aloud	July: (after)
Score 8~22 Result	15 students: Score up	Score 12~23 8 got 70% (Pass Line)

② Questionnaire: April & July

1. Teaching confidence of pronunciation <i>April</i> : low 1 → 5 high average 2.0	<i>July</i> : low 1-2-3-4-5 high average: 3.5
2. Pronounce the new words correctly <i>April</i> : low 1 → 5 high average 2.5	<i>July</i> : low 1-2-3-4-5 high average: 3.8
3. Read the sentence fluently <i>April</i> : low 1 → 5 high average: 2.3	<i>July</i> : low 1-2-3-4-5 high average: 3.4

③ Half of the time of 15-week-class schedule for *English Skill* is conducted as the following schedule by using a special Phonics textbook with native speaker's CD and DVD instruction. (Sumi, 2022)

contents		contents	
1 <sup>st</sup> week	introduction	8 <sup>th</sup> week	Consonant 1
2 <sup>nd</sup> week	Eiken pre-level 2 check	9 <sup>th</sup> week	Consonant 2
3 <sup>rd</sup> week	Alphabet dictation	10 <sup>th</sup> week	Consonant with vowel
4 <sup>th</sup> week	Vowel sounds	11 <sup>th</sup> week	digraph & blend
5 <sup>th</sup> week	Vowel teams	12 <sup>th</sup> week	liaison
6 <sup>th</sup> week	Diphthong	13 <sup>th</sup> week	review
7 <sup>th</sup> week	Rhyming words	14 <sup>th</sup> week	Eiken pre-level 2 check
		15 <sup>th</sup> week	Final presentation

From the above classes, all the students got a through training of English phonics, which helped them to have the basic knowledge of phonetic symbols, alphabet reading and writing, way to pronounce the words and sentences with correct accent and intonation. Thus at the end of the term, they began to have the confidence of

speaking English and felt some achievements of English pronunciation.

The other half time of the class is for conversation and writing practice, which enforced the students' ability of outputting power in teaching speaking and writing activity for elementary school children.

By the above phonics instruction and training, to some extent, students improved three abilities of listening and catching English instantly; pronouncing English correctly; and speaking naturally with confidence.

In sum, in order to build a strong foundation of our students' English ability, we have to train them to improve their pronunciation, expand their vocabulary, learn the natural flow of English, have English speaking confidence. Actually, there are many techniques to improve English speaking skills, such as speech shadowing, self-talk, think in English, retell a story in English, practice in public speaking event etc. Therefore, the next part is to explain the importance of improve students' outputting ability of writing through reading.

## 2. Appropriate Reading Practice for Writing Skill

How to improve students' writing ability is another important task for elementary teachers' training. Work out simple but correct short English message is an absolutely necessary skill for teaching children. In the *English Skill* class, a writing practice is also carried out for ten weeks.

### 2.1 Short Passage Writing Practice:

Every week, a topic is given at the end of the class as a homework, which is required to answer with 60~70 words. The sample passage is shown in the following week for students to analyze and self-check their own writings. After checking all students' writing passages from the first week to last week, students writing technique and motivation are greatly built up, as most of their scores are from 3 up to 4.5 among score 5. This writing practice is referred to the Part 5 of Pre-level 2 of English Proficiency Test.

Half of the year (or one term) study for *English Skill* is really not enough for training an elementary school teacher to teach children in the future. So the curriculum and syllabus should be changed and enforced as soon as possible. Comparing to other Asian countries' English teaching from the elementary school, Japan should catch up fast to the present international competition and bring out the globalized talents for Japanese success.

As a teacher of English in Japan for many years, the most difficult task is to find a good textbook for reading class at various levels as well as with writing practice. Hereby I'd like to make a comparison between the textbooks in Japan and China.

### 2.2 College English Textbooks in China

In China, the university teachers all use the College English series for non-English major students. There is a rigid syllabus at university to meet the national educational goals. To reinforce or support this system, the Band Test was devised by CET. This system of goal-syllabus-test is well established and seems to be working very efficiently to produce highly proficient English learners, irrespective of their majors at university (Taura, 2008).

**a) General English:** This main textbook is designed for students to study twice a week both in class and at home. Each unit of eight has one theme, including two passages, one for focus reading and the other for sub reading; and four parts, Part I pre-reading task, Part II Text A, Part III Text B, and Part IV theme-related language learning tasks. Part I and III are assigned for students to do outside of class; teachers only need to check the result from time to time. Part II and Part IV are mainly taught and practiced in class.

In Part II, after the 800-word Text A, there are a detailed bilingual vocabulary list, 10 more comprehension questions, three points for discussion, Text Organization for writing paragraph headings and main ideas, Language Sense Enhancement (poetry reading), Language Focus on vocabulary drill, Structure, and Comprehension exercises, and lastly, a cloze exercise and Paragraph Translation. The whole Text A has a 15-page exercise.

In Part III, Text B is for home reading; the theme is connected with Text A of similar length. After the text, there are exercises for Comprehension Check, Translation of the sentences, Language Practice, Group Discussion, Essay Writing, and Writing Strategy. Students can check their answers in the appendix.

Part IV is designed for further understanding Texts A & B, and all the language practices, focused on class discussion and writing. It is expected to take one hour to do the exercise in class.

One whole unit has about 30 pages, Text A with 20 pages exercise, and Text B with 10 pages practice. The whole book has about 300 pages, with 100 pages of five kinds of appendices for references. It is usually suggested to finish each unit within 5 hours.

#### **b) Listening and Speaking:**

This set of books also has 6 volumes, with teachers' manual and CD ROMs. Each book contains 16 units, and each unit includes four parts as follows:

*Part A* focuses on skill training: 1) Communication, 2) Listening Strategy. *Part B* is the exercise for listening and speaking drill, with three exercises: 1) Pre-listening Task; 2) Listening Tasks, which has two drills: one is "Listening for general understanding/main idea," the other is "Listening for details/specific information." 3) Speaking Tasks, this aims at helping students to get used to social communication by providing two sample dialogues. *Part C* is called "Additional Listening." *Part D* is intended for "Home Listening."

In addition to the above four parts, some English songs, humorous stories, and famous idioms and proverbs are introduced in "Leisure Time" in every other unit for students to enjoy, and there are two sets of tests at the end of each book for students to test themselves.

**c) Reading:** This book is designed as extracurricular reading material to accompany the main course book — General English.

The length of the passage from Book 1 to Book 4 develops from 800 words to 2000 words. Each book has eight units, each of the eight units has three passages, containing the following five parts: 1) Brief Introduction, to stimulate before reading; 2) Side notes for new words on every page for easy reading; 3) among three passages, the first one is closely connected with the theme of main course book—General English. Another two

reading passages contain the subjects of various themes such as short story, SF, biography, history etc, in order to broaden students' viewpoints and enrich their knowledge of the humanities. Following the first main passage, there are:

a) Comprehension exercises, vocabulary check, and questions for discussion; and b) Reading skills and exercises. This latter practice covers "Recognizing topics and main ideas," "Highlighting the topic sentences", "Recognizing prefixes and suffixes", "Using a dictionary", "Identifying transitions between ideas", "Outlining and summarizing", "Developing reading strategies" and others.

**d) Fast Reading:** This set of books also has 6 volumes with 8 units as all the other books, but they are much thinner than any other books and in loose-leaf style. That means all the pages can be separated for tests. Each unit has four passages and is divided into four parts: A1, A2 and B1, B2. A1 and B1 are for class practice, A2 and B2 are for homework. The reading time set for each 500-to-800-word passage is between five and eight minutes, and then another five minutes to finish the comprehension answering sheet with five to seven questions.

So it is designed for students to read using all the reading skills they have acquired from their reading textbooks and classes. At the end of each exercise book, an appendix, "Key to comprehension exercises" is attached for students to check by themselves.

With this whole set of books, the publishers also provide College English Band Test books from 1 to 4 for general students to practice, as well as 5 to 6 for high level students to prepare, because all the non-English major students have to pass the Band 4 test, when they finish their study of two years. Some high level students can take the test for Band 6 if they pass the Band 4 earlier than other students in the first year. Since this set of goal-based textbooks is very systematic and complete, students feel they have enough material for study, and teachers find it a great help to use ready-made, all-round materials for class teaching. The effect of using these books is stunning, and almost 95% of students pass the Band 4 test in big cities, and approximately 70% in common cities and remote areas.

In addition to the above set of College English Textbooks, there are many other different versions of the same level books published in various places in China. Different universities usually choose their favorite versions for appropriate usage by their students. So it has been a great challenge for different publishers and universities to compete with each other.

### 2.3 College English Textbooks in Japan

In Japan, the English textbook publishing market is larger than in any other Asian country. There are so many Japanese publishers as well as a large number of foreign presses that it is always so hard to make the choice of an appropriate textbook for teaching.

According to my experience of teaching English in Japan, it always consumes much energy to find a good English textbook for non-English major students, and the reading textbooks are seldom in graded volumes for students to learn step by step. Different teachers use their favorite textbooks at different universities. The

Ministry of Education, Science & Technology doesn't have a guideline for College English Teaching. I always wonder if the free choice for textbooks by different teachers good to meet a required goal? Is it an effective way for language education? These remain as very serious questions. In my opinion, the system lacks efficiency and competition. Maybe this is one of the reasons for Japanese students' lower English achievement, especially compared with other Asian countries such as Korea and China in TOEFL results. The features for College English Textbooks published in Japan can be classified as follows:

**a) Various kinds of books, but not systematic, or graded**

Since The Ministry of Education in Japan doesn't set a guideline for College English Education, teachers and students don't know which level is appropriate for them to reach each year. English is just a tool for people to apply for getting information and communicating with other people in the world. What is the shortest and most effective way to achieve this accomplishment should be taken into account by education authorities. Free teaching and free curriculum harms the results of CEE. In the process of language training, learners should be taught and practice step by step. As stimulation, students need to know their own level by some bar test to see how much they have improved after a semester or a year's study. It is a critical problem for CEE and publishers to pay great attention to.

**b) Very good reading materials, but lack of exercises**

Most of the textbooks lack detailed exercises for students to practice. After a passage, the exercises are usually two or three pages, which cover some comprehension questions, vocabulary fill-in-the-blank exercises, and sentence translation. Three of my favorite reading textbooks can be used as examples: 1) *Read Up—22 Steps to Strategic Reading* (Seibido): it is so well designed with most helpful skills for students to know. Each chapter begins with "Questions and Vocabulary Expander" for preparation. Then "Skill Builder" comes with the "Reading Passage". After the passage, there are five true or false questions, then a listening activator and "Info Organizer" for summary practice. The whole chapter is only 4 pages. 2) *On-line VOA English <Life>* published by Shouhakusha: the first part of the unit comes with a "Column" in Japanese as an introduction, the second part is a whole-page passage with 20 or more blanks to fill out while doing the listening, the footnotes for new words are very limited with Japanese translation. Then 10 true or false questions, another 10 choices to match the new words with their English meaning, and last comes the "Composition" of three translation sentences and two questions for discussion. The whole unit covers six pages. 3) The third textbook I have used for reading practice is *Intermediate Fast Reading* (Seibido). This book is quite similar to *Fast Reading* of China's College English, which begins with three questions as "Before you read", then the item of 10 "Target vocabulary", then a 300-350- word "Reading Passage" with five questions for comprehension check. After the passage, there is a "Listening Comprehension" for students to write out their answers to three questions, and five multiple-choice questions for "Vocabulary Reinforcement". The last part ends with a task of finding three "Idioms" in the reading passage. The whole unit has four pages. At the end of the book, there is a note for each unit, explained in Japanese.

So Japanese editors and publishers provide hundreds of good English textbooks to the College English market, ranging from grammar training, vocabulary study, reading skills, news reading, to listening, and writing, but only one book is not enough to cover the necessary skills, so teachers should combine some books by themselves for different level students to use. All these books are published by different publishing houses, and made by separate editors and scholars. It is very hard for teachers to select a good reading book for students to learn step by step to reach a certain level of English.

### c) Large vocabulary, but without bilingual word list

As I have mentioned above, all the textbooks and materials are very informative and updated, but sometimes they are too difficult for non-English-major students, and there are too many new words which have special and technical meanings. Besides, the levels are not divided, nor are the books published in a series. There is no coherence among the books, so that students cannot learn English in a systematic way. They study this book in this semester and that book in another. Sometimes they pick up one teacher who focuses on grammar, and sometimes they encounter a teacher who emphasizes listening practice. So to the students, it's a mess.

The most obvious shortcoming of English textbooks used at Japanese university level is the exercises for vocabulary study. The word list usually contains no pronunciation, nor bilingual explanations. Teachers cannot instruct them and students can not pronounce correctly and read well in class. This is a serious problem for Japanese students.

So in a word, most of the College English textbooks published in Japan are geared toward extensive reading, not for intensive reading in class. Without intensive reading and focused study on words, phrases and grammar, they cannot master English and little achievement can be made.

With the above comparison, the following result can be a support to Okamoto's (2007) assumption that Japanese university students' English proficiency is at its highest at the time of the entrance examination, after which it is said to decline rapidly.

Eight years ago, my research group administered two versions of mock TOEFL tests at six universities – two national universities in China, and in Japan two national universities, one prefectural university and one private university in the year 2005 – 2006, once at the beginning of the first year as a pre-test and the other at the end of the year as a post-test. We selected 30 students from each university at random to take the tests to assess our subjects' English proficiency level. We found that improvement was observed in the listening scores at three Japanese universities whereas all four Japanese universities had a decrease in their scores of reading and structure. Meanwhile, the two universities in China maintained all their scores and furthermore improvement was seen in their reading skill scores. In a word, no deterioration was observed in the first year of the Chinese universities while both improvement and deterioration revealed itself among Japanese first year university students.

So in my opinion, a set of good graded textbooks in hand is a key to the success of English teaching and study.



### 3. Teachers' Training between Japan and China

In most of the Asian countries, *Early English Education* and *Subject Study* become popular and English-teaching-only teachers are very common, with the development for “Elementary to Junior High English Curriculum” and guideline for English education. It's the high time for Japan to make changes of the present situation of “class-based-teacher” assignments, otherwise, English education in Japan will be far behind the other non-English speaking countries. To improve the level of English education in Japan comes from the early education in elementary school, and to bring up significant qualified English teachers is most urgent and crucial tasks.

Take a recent survey of English Level Test, we can find the gap between Japan and other countries as follows: According to the EF (Education First) “English Test” on Nov.16, 2021, among 112 countries, Japan comes to 78, first time falls to the “Low Level” group. For the detailed information of this test, please take a look of the Reference No. 15 at the end of this paper.

表 1

#### 世界ランキング

非常に高い	高い	標準的	低い	非常に低い
1 オランダ	14 セルビア	32 香港特別行政区	59 アルメニア	87 アフガニスタン
2 オーストリア	15 ルーマニア	33 スペイン	60 ブラジル	88 ウズベキスタン
3 デンマーク	16 ポーランド	34 レバノン	61 グアテマラ	89 シリア
4 シンガポール	17 ハンガリー	35 イタリア	62 ネパール	90 エクアドル
5 ノルウェー	18 フィリピン	36 モルドバ	63 エチオピア	90 ヨルダン
6 ベルギー	19 ギリシャ	37 韓国	63 パキスタン	92 メキシコ
7 ポルトガル	20 スロバキア	38 ベラルーシ	65 バングラデシュ	93 ミャンマー
8 スウェーデン	21 ケニア	39 アルバニア	66 ベトナム	94 アンゴラ
9 フィンランド	22 エストニア	40 ウクライナ	67 タンザニア	94 カメルーン
10 クロアチア	23 ブルガリア	41 ボリビア	68 モザンビーク	96 カザフスタン
11 ドイツ	24 リトアニア	42 ガーナ	69 アラブ首長国連邦	97 カンボジア
12 南アフリカ	25 スイス	43 キューバ	70 トルコ	98 スーダン
13 ルクセンブルク	26 ラトビア	44 コスタリカ	71 モロッコ	99 コートジボワール
	27 チェコ共和国	44 ドミニカ共和国	72 バーレーン	100 タイ
	28 マレーシア	44 バラグアイ	73 パナマ	101 キルギス
	29 ナイジェリア	47 チリ	73 ベネズエラ	102 オマーン
	30 アルゼンチン	48 インド	75 アルジェリア	103 タジキスタン
	31 フランス	49 中国	76 ニカラグア	104 サウジアラビア
		50 ジョージア	77 マダガスカル	105 ハイチ
		51 ロシア	78 日本	106 ソマリア
		52 チュニジア	79 カタール	107 イラク
		53 ウルグアイ	80 インドネシア	108 リビア
		54 エルサルバドル	81 コロンビア	109 ルワンダ
		55 ホンジュラス	82 スリランカ	110 コンゴ民主共和国
		56 ベルー	83 モンゴル	111 南スーダン
		57 マカオ特別行政区	84 クウェート	112 イエメン
		58 イラン	85 エジプト	
			86 アゼルバイジャン	

## 3.1 The Changes of Teachers' Training in China:

The following list 2 is the changes of elementary teachers' Certificate in China from 1998 to 2016. (Reference No, 13), List 3, 4 is the core curriculum of English major, Beijing Normal University. (Beijing Educational University)

表2 中国小学校教員の最終学歴

年	教師数 ／比率	修士	学士	大学専科 卒業相当	中等師範学校 卒業	中等師範学校 卒業以下	合計
1998	教師数 (人)	—	31380	715514	4757509	314987	5819390
	比率 (%)	—	0.54	12.30	81.75	5.41	100.00
2006	教師数 (人)	2158	510232	2955535	2056326	63306	5587557
	比率 (%)	0.04	9.13	52.89	36.80	1.13	100.00
2010	教師数 (人)	4684	1110503	3100558	1384082	33620	5633447
	比率 (%)	0.08	19.71	55.04	24.57	0.60	100.00
2016	教師数 (人)	6633	290224	123651	4262	25	424795
	比率 (%)	1.56	68.32	29.11	1.00	0.01	100.00

表3 首都師範大学初等教育学院英語方向における教科専門科目 (必修科目)

Types		Names		Credits	Semester
compulsory (51)	Subject bases (38)	Basic courses (32)	Basic English I	4	1
			Basic English II	4	2
			Basic English III	4	3
			Basic English IV	4	4
			Advanced English I	2	5
			Advanced English II	2	6
			Extensive Reading I	2	3
			Extensive Reading II	2	4
			Listening and Speaking I	2	1
			Listening and Speaking II	2	2
			English Recitation	2	2
			Translation	2	6
	Core courses (6)	English Phonetics	2	1	
		English Grammar	2	3	
		English Writing	2	4	
		Elementary School Teacher's Oral English	2	4	
	subject courses (6)	Basic courses (4)	Selected Readings of Children's Literature in English	2	5
			Core courses (2)	Elementary English Curriculum Standards and Textbook Analysis	2
	subject teaching (7)	Basic courses (4)	Effective Instruction on Elementary English	2	6
			Case studies on Elementary English Teaching	2	7
Core courses (3)			Elementary English Teaching Design and Practice	3	6

表4 首都師範大学初等教育学院英語方向における教科専門科目 (選択科目)

Types		Name		Credits	smester
elective (14)	Subject bases (6)	expanded courses	Viewing, Listening and Speaking	2	3
			English Listening	2	4
			Survey of English-Speaking Countries	2	3
			Linguistics and Applied Linguistics	2	5
			British and American Literature	2	6
	subject courses (4)	expanded courses	English singing and acting	2	3
			Language and Communication	2	4
			Reading and Writing on English Educational Literature	2	6
	subject teaching (4)	expanded courses	Elementary English Games	2	5
			English Testing	2	5
			Research on Elementary English Teaching	2	7

The next List 5 is the core curriculum of English major, Shanghai Normal

University, the data of which was taken by the author from a research trip in 2011. From the list 3 & 4, we can perceive that the core curriculum of Educational universities at Beijing and Shanghai are quite similar and detailed on training of students' English proficiency, especially both set 2-credit-phonics classes for one semester or 36 hours. This is one of the big differences between Japan and China in the way to bring about the English teachers for elementary to senior high schools. The other big difference is that all the English teachers are the graduates from English major and teaching English only, no matter it is at elementary or high schools.

表 5

**Table1.** Compulsory language credits and elective credits at TCS

year semester -	1st		2nd				3rd				4th				Total			
	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B		
A hour B credit	hour	credit	hour	credit	hour	credit	hour	credit	hour	credit	hour	credit	hour	credit	hour	credit	total hours	total credits
Integrated English I	4	3	4	3													144*	6
English Listening/speaking I,II	2	1	2	2													72	3
English Grammar			2	2													36	2
English Writing I, II	2	2	2	1													72	4
English Phonetics	2	2															36	2
English Vocabulary			2	2													36	2
*Integrated English II					4	3	4	3									144	6
English Writing III,IV					2	2	2	2									72	4
English Listening/Speaking III					2	1	2	1									72	4
									2	2							36	2
*Interpreting									2	2							36	2
Japanese																		
French									4	3	4	3					144	6
German																		
*Integrated English III									4	3	4	3					144	6
Linguistics									2	2							72	4
British Literature									2	2							36	2
American Literature											2	2					36	2
Translation											2	2					36	2
Integrated English IV													2	2			72	4
Intercultural Communication													2	1			36	1
Restrictive Selective Courses																		
Integrated Ethics					2	2	2	2									72	4
Integrated Ethics Lectures																	12	2
Institutional selective courses	2	2	4	4	6	6	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	504	28
Optional selective courses	2	2	2	2	2	2	6	6	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	432	24
Educational Observation					1week		1week		1week		1week	2						2
Educational Training															1week	1		1
Educational Practice													8week	6				6
Graduation Paper																6		6
<b>Total</b>	14	12	18	16	18	16	20	18	24	22	20	20	12	17	7		2196	137

Furthermore, there is a requirement to check the achievements of English study and all the university students need to pass the following test:

表6

大学英語 4・6 級考試	資格試験	レベル評価
CET-4	英 検	2 級～準 1 級
	TOEIC	500～600
	TOEFL	480～540
CET-6	英 検	準 1 級～1 級
	TOEIC	650～850
	TOEFL	520～650

### 3.2 The Changes of Teachers' Training in Japan:

While in Japan, the teachers' training reform has been discussed from 2014 to 2017. In 2017, MEXT (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and technology) decided the Core Curriculum for training the English teachers, which instructed the study contents and attainment target to bring up significant instructors. Some university teachers and researchers began to suggest some high-quality teachers' training programs, especially shifting from the present common "class-based-teacher" assignments to "English-only-teacher" system, in order to make elementary English education in Japan catch up the world level as fast as possible (Honda, 2017).

The following list is a suggested advanced curriculum for the graduate school assignments, comparing with Taiwan and Korean curriculum.

表7 日本の大学院（専攻科）における深化カリキュラム案

授業科目	単 位	開講 年次	韓国 (%)	台湾 (%)	コアカリ
教室英語	2	1-前	83	100	指導法2(1)①②・専門1(1)②
Story Telling	2	1-前	75	100	専門1(1)③・専門1(2)③
歌・チャンツと発音指導	2	1-前	67	100	指導法1(2)③・専門1(1)①②
文字と音韻認識指導	2	1-前	50	100	指導法1(2)⑤
読み・書き・文構造指導	2	1-前	100	100	指導法2(1)③・専門1(2)①
外国語指導と文化	2	1-後	75	100	専門1(2)④
児童・教師間インタラクション	2	1-後	75	75	指導法2(1)②・指導法2(2)⑤
教材研究	2	1-後	8	75	指導法1(1)②・2(2)①・2(2)④
模擬授業 I	2	1-後	100	100	指導法2(2)①～⑤
テストと評価	2	2-前	100	100	指導法2(2)⑤
学校インターンシップ（英語）	2	2-前	100	100	指導法2(2)①～⑤
模擬授業 II	2	2-後	0	0	指導法2(2)①～⑤

注) 韓国 (%), 台湾 (%) は、韓国および台湾で小学校英語科教員養成を担っている大学でのカリキュラムにおいて扱いはある割合を示したものである。

Recently some educational universities are carrying out certain reforms for English teachers' training, the following research symposium report can provide us with a glimpse of scholars' concern and suggestions for

the change of English education at elementary schools. (Noda, 2017)

- 1) Osaka Educational University (OEU) English Course:
- 2) Tokyo Gakugei University (TGU)

## Conclusion

“Practice makes perfect” and “Where there is a will, there is a way” are the two most important proverbs among many, and indispensable mottoes for any foreign language learners. In any language learning, there is no short cut or magical trick; practicing again and again is the only way.

To sum up, this paper emphasizes the importance of appropriate graded English textbooks, by comparing Chinese College English Textbooks with those used in Japanese institutions, and suggests making some sets of Japanese College English Course books in series; also it employs the theory of “practical English language teaching” for the analysis of reading strategies with vocabulary training; lastly it raises some questions that language teachers are always concerned about, as well as proposed personal suggestions to solve these English learning problems.

In order to improve students' ability of using English and to enable them to become as proficient as possible, vocabulary, phonics training is just one of many other strategies for EFL learners. But it is a critical problem among many students with poor vocabulary skills in classroom performance for communication, reading and presentation. If the national guidelines and a well-designed curriculum could be decided, and appropriate graded textbooks and certain criteria for English achievement, such as graded tests, could also be put into practice, College English Education in Japan might see a marvelous change which could enable Japanese students to join the international competition.

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イー・エフ・エデュケーション・ファースト(EF)は2021年11月16日、世界112か国・地域の約200万人の英語試験ビッグデータを活用した英語能力のベンチマーク「EF EPI 英語能力指数」を発表した。日本は78位と調査開始以降初めて下位3分の1のグループに入った。  
EF EPI 英語能力指数は、EFがオンラインで無料公開している英語力測定テスト「EF SET」(エフセット)の前年受験データを元に、非英語圏の国・地域における英語能力を、経年的に計測・追跡したもの。2011年より毎年秋に発表している。EPI 指数の国別ランキング、CEFRに準拠した5段階の英語能力レベルのほか、「人材競争力指数」「人的資本指数」等の外部指標と英語能力指数の相関関係を考察した分析レポートから構成されている。

## 要 旨

## 小学校教員に必要な英語発信力の指導と効果 ——English Skill の授業における学生の発音と書く技能の訓練と検証

陸 君

本研究は、文科省が2017年示した『小学校教員養成課程 外国語（英語）コアカリキュラム』に則り、英語を使える人材の育成目標を達成する為に、大学英語をどのように改善すべきか、特に小学校教員養成にどのような能力訓練が必要かに関して、研究と実践の結果を明らかにする。本研究者は、約6年間の春学期担当していた「小学校英語活動」の授業内容を紹介するとともに、2021年度春学期からのEnglish Skillの授業で、学生に英語を使う自己評価を学期始めと期末の聞き取り結果を比較検証し、『小学校教員に必要な英語指導4技能』について考察、提案することを目標とする。

今の小学校英語は3年生から始め、英語に親しく慣れるのは目標にしているが、指導する教員が自信のない人が多くて、特に英語の発音に苦勞しているように見受けられている。今大学で学んでいる学生にも同じ傾向が表れている。本論文は、この問題を通して、日本の英語教育にあまり重視されていない音声指導にも着目し、フォニックス訓練の効果を将来の教育現場で読み書き指導の知識・技能を検証する。

近年、東アジア諸国では、グローバル化に対応した次世代の人材育成の根幹として小学校からの英語教育が進められている。日本の小学校英語「教科化」に対応する為に、本論文は英語を母国語としない中国の小学校英語「英語専任（専科）養成の現状も参考にしながら、質の高い英語教員を確保するための養成のあり方を以下のように提案する。1) 教職課程のグローバル化 2) 小学校教員としての総合力を持ちながら英語を指導するのに十分な英語力と指導力も有する、3) 基本的かつ重要な英語アルファベットの音素と発音記号を習得し、4年間の教員養成カリキュラムを定める。

キーワード：小学校英語教員養成、英語音声指導、読み書き技能

